

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Farr: Special Legislative Session Needed to Protect Property Rights



"A special session of the General Assembly should be scheduled as soon as possible to reform Connecticut's eminent domain law to prevent more government property seizures to make way for economic development projects from taking place", state Representative Bob Farr, R-19th District, said today.

Representative Farr recently signed a petition calling for a special General Assembly session to enact a moratorium on the taking of private property for economic development purposes and to consider legislation to amend the state's eminent domain law by deleting the section that permits development agencies to seize property for economic development.

"One of the basic rights the United States Constitution provides to its citizens is the right to be secure in the ownership of their homes," said Representative Farr. "On June 23rd, the U. S. Supreme Court ruled in a New London eminent domain case that homes could be taken for private development purposes. That decision put property rights throughout Connecticut in jeopardy. The General Assembly must act as soon as possible to protect property rights before other cities authorize the seizure of more people's homes to maximize their tax base."

Representative Farr cosponsored a measure that would have achieved those goals had it not been defeated on a party-line vote during a June 28th special session. The majority Democrats rejected the measure, an amendment proposed by House Republican legislators.

"When the Supreme Court ruled that private property could be taken for development projects, it also indicated that the state legislature can eliminate that provision from its eminent domain statute if it chooses to do so," Representative Farr said. "I believe we should make that change to protect Connecticut families before their homes are taken by municipalities who may be tempted to move ahead with projects like New London's while they still can."

"There is nothing theoretical about the threat to property rights in Connecticut – as the experience of the homeowners in New London's Fort Trumbull neighborhood clearly

demonstrates. This is not a complex or difficult issue and it is one that we should resolve quickly - before more people lose their homes,” Representative Farr said.